

dialogue

The Staff Newsletter of the

Ministry of Community and Social Services

Safeguarding children's rights and needs: licensing becomes a profession

by Julia Naczynski

More than 140 staff involved in licensing under the Day Nurseries Act (DNA) and the Child and Family Services Act (CFSa) attended a two-day enforcement and educational conference January 30 and 31.

The purpose of the conference, which included staff from every area and district office and policy branches in children's services and child care program areas, was to give staff clearer knowledge of the ministry's expectations about enforcement under the two acts. Licensing is "the best tool we have today to safeguard children's rights and needs," said Barry Whalen, director of Management Support Branch, in an opening address.

Management Support Branch sponsored the conference, held near Orangeville, which was the first of its kind for licensing staff. Under the DNA, ministry staff license child care centres and private home day care agencies; under the CFSa, the ministry licenses child welfare agencies, group homes and residential children's facilities.

The conference marked the launch of new training materials aimed at providing consistent standards for evaluation and enforcement under the two acts: the DNA Enforcement Training Program and the CFSa Enforcement Training Program. Dr. Judith Colbert, who began developing the two training programs after the



Dr. Judith Colbert was on hand to launch new enforcement training programs for licensing staff at the January conference.

publication of the Safeguards report and an enforcement practices review in child care, offered an overview of the training modules.

The launch of the training programs marks the progress of licensing "from a job to a profession," she said. The training covers such facets of licensing as site inspection, monitoring, complaint follow-up and documentation.

Applicants and operators have the right to request a hearing before the Child and Family Services Review Board in cases where a licence is revoked, when conditions are placed on the licence, or when the ministry's

continued on page 2

An experience that young offenders never forget: Project DARE

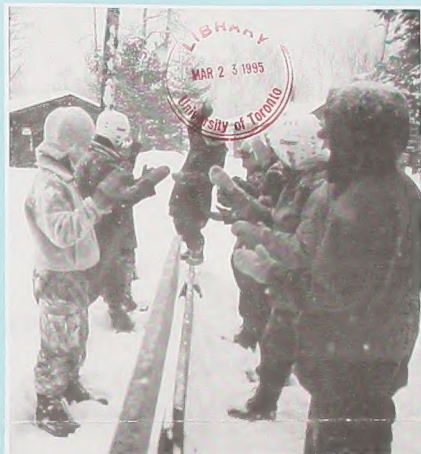


Photo: Colin Jewell/Project DARE

Students at Project DARE cluster around to watch the progress of one of their peers trying out a balance-beam exercise. Open custody places have become more readily available and staff are beginning to promote the camp once again to judges and Crown attorneys who deal with young offenders.

by Dave Rudan

We're back in business with open custody beds could well be the calling card of Fraser Pauley as he criss-crosses the province meeting young offender services staff and interviewing candidates for Project DARE, the ministry's wilderness program for young offenders.

In 1989, an interim ministry strategy converted two of DARE's three residential groups to secure custody while community resources

were being created. The temporary status finally ended Dec. 31 when one of the 10-bed groups was re-instated to open custody; as of Mar. 31 a second group will also make the change.

Over the five-year period the backlog for open custody places discouraged judges and Crown attorneys from recommending the unique resources offered at DARE, says Fraser, who is supervisor of student services. Now, DARE's

continued on page 2

A reunion in Ottawa to mark a new start

Soon, the Ottawa Youth Detention Centre located at Bronson and Sunnyside avenues will be no more. Replacing it in May will be the brand-new William E. Hay Centre, located on the corner of Hawthorne Avenue and Russell Road.

The closure and opening of the secure custody and detention centre for young offenders is an occasion to be marked with a reunion of employees, both current and former. A celebration is being organized for late spring to bring together former

staff of the OYDC, which was established in 1963.

If you are a past employee of OYDC and are interested in attending such a reunion, please contact Michel Belanger at 613-730-3581, or write Michel at the OYDC, 1145 Bronson Place, Ottawa ON K1S 4H4. If you know the whereabouts of past employees, or have photographs and/or anecdotes you are willing to share, please forward these to Michel, or superintendent Allan Martin, or Deborah Sonego at OYDC.

North re-org team named

Members of the Implementation Team who will be working on the north office re-organization with project manager Peter Noble have been selected. In the north, they are: Mike McGinn, North Bay Area Office; Anne Sikkema and Rod McIver, Kenora District Office; Gloria Groves, Thunder Bay Area Office; and David Zuccato, Sault Ste. Marie District Office.

From corporate, the team includes MaryJo Dodds, Janis Fraser, David Cope and Alan Gunn; Rejean Nadeau



from French Language Services; and Mort Seymour from Program Management Division.

To reach the team, based in Sault Ste. Marie, see the address in the People and Places column on page 4.

Safeguarding children's rights

continued from page 1

representative refuses to issue or renew a licence. A workshop given by Dr. Herb Sohn, chair of the CFS Review Board, was overflowing with staff eager to hear the chair's views about the role of the review board.

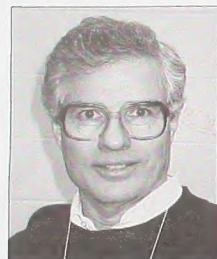
The 18-member board, previously known as the Children's Services Review Board, is an independent decision-making body guided by one principle: the best interests of the child, noted Dr. Sohn. A child placed in residential care has the right to request a review of that placement. A

three-person panel of review board members can order a child's release from care, or place the child elsewhere, or order the child to remain in custody at a placement, he noted.

Recently there have been very few hearings related to licensing, Dr. Sohn said, in 1993/94 there were only 10 applications of that type. To avoid unnecessary hearings, the review board promotes the concept of alternate dispute resolution, or ADR, said Dr. Sohn. This is an informal approach in which all parties meet to discuss the dispute and to arrive at a mutually-agreeable solution.

Dr. Sohn, who was the province's first human rights officer, told the workshop participants that they, as licensing specialists, are both "enablers and enforcers" who protect children but help operators and agencies, within reason, to meet the criteria spelled out in licensing regulations.

Other workshop sessions covered such topics as licensing on and off native reserves, interviewing children for licensing reviews, licensing practice for services to medically fragile children, playground safety and licensing school-age child care.



Dr. Herb Sohn

Information system being piloted

A children's services project to develop models for a core information system is receiving \$350,000 from the ministry's Community Innovation Fund.

Pilot test sites for the children's information services system include Hamilton, Thunder Bay, Ottawa,

Windsor and Sudbury.

Minister Tony Silipo said the project will support the move to an integrated system of services for children and families. The funding, announced Feb. 14, will help pay for a project co-ordinator and technical consultant, software and training.

Project DARE

continued from page 1



Students at DARE get accustomed to winter activities in the outdoors.

director, Bob Fairbridge, has launched an awareness campaign to regain the attention of professionals involved with young offenders.

DARE began 24 years ago on Loxton Lake in the Algonquin region, outside South River. Project DARE (Development through Adventure, Responsibility, Education) is neither a vacation for the students, nor a military-styled "boot camp", says Bob Fairbridge. However, the facility battles both misconceptions as a result of positive provincial and national television exposure over the years.

"We don't ask kids to dig ditches, then fill them up again as punishment." Everything the youth do has a self-evident purpose, says Bob. DARE operates year-round, in all seasons, and staff use the natural consequences that nature can dish out when students ignore good advice on how to stay dry and warm during a wilderness trip.

For the difficult-to-manage offender, the physically-demanding challenges offered by a rugged wilderness environment can crack the "tough-kid" exterior. According to psychologist Adam Lodzinski, DARE graduates have a better chance for crime-free futures. About 50 per cent of those who have graduated from DARE have not gone on to adult court.

"The bottom line is to get these kids to recognize they have more to offer than they think they have — and most

of them don't think they have much," observes Bob Fairbridge.

In addition to the 30 open custody places, DARE is being used by community agencies to help young people develop confidence and self-esteem. Last month a group of young men on welfare participated in a successful 16-day motivational workshop. There is also a program called Women Who DARE for women who are survivors of domestic violence.

DARE facilities can also be used for ministry staff training programs. There is a fully-equipped conference room and over-night accommodation for 18 persons, says Bobbie Baxter, administrative services co-ordinator. "People just have to cover the cost of meals."

The challenge now facing Bob Fairbridge and staff is to convince many in the ministry and in the justice professions that DARE is not a holiday for young offenders.

"It's anything but," says Bob. However, months later, when they graduate, not only do they have smiles of relief but the confidence that if they can live in harmony with nature, maybe they can achieve similar success in coping with their environment back home.

For more information on all the DARE programs being offered in 1995/96 call DARE at 705-386-2376 or fax 705-386-2345.

Dave Rudan is with the MCSS Communications and Marketing Branch.

Eliminate extraneous expressions, or Use fewer words, Part Deux

**PLAIN
LANGUAGE
PLEASE**

Keep it short and simple — that's always a good rule to follow. The fewer words you use, the better.

Here are more "short and simple" substitutes to use:

Instead of:
by means of
until such time
in view of the fact
on the part of
under the provisions of
with a view to
it is probable that
notwithstanding the fact
adequate number of

Use:
by
until
because
by
under
to
probably
although
enough

Diversity strategy for MCSS

The ministry's Management Committee approved the Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Strategy proposed by the Community Services Unit in January.

The strategy outlines the ministry's directions towards ensuring that its service system is free of racial, cultural or linguistic barriers. A workplan — currently being finalized — includes a

proposal to hold a one-day "think tank" with participation by each area office to identify and share best practices that support anti-racism and cultural diversity. Also, a research reference group composed of community representatives, social services funders and ministry staff will be developed as part of the consultation process.

The different ways we age

— a report from Ongwanada Resource Centre's annual conference

by Jack Stiff

By the year 2000, more than 37 per cent of Ontario's population will be 45 years of age or older. A recent conference, "Aging Clients and Aging Staff," at Kingston's Ongwanada Resource Centre, brought together caregivers and other professionals to share information about aging and its impact on caregivers, the aging population for whom they care, and older individuals with developmental disabilities.

What you can do to slow your aging process

Dr. George Merry, a geriatrician from St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital in Kingston, told conference participants there are a number of things we can do to help slow down our aging process.

A 25-year-old has an average of about 15 per cent body fat, while a 75-year-old has about 30 per cent. Besides the increase, there's also redistribution of that fat — and fat redistribution contributes to wrinkling. For some we need only look down or over our shoulders to see where it is.

As we become older, we become physically weaker and lose muscle and bone mass. Loss of bone mass contributes to osteoporosis (more common in women than men because of hormonal change related to estrogen; more calcium now can help prevent osteoporosis). As we lose this bone substance we become more susceptible to fractures, particularly of the spine, hips and wrists. Lack of activity also causes loss of bone mass, so exercise becomes particularly important as we age.

Dr. Merry referred to studies that show that regular exercise does not greatly extend the average life span of the frail elderly patient. But it substantially improves perceived

health, adding much to the quality of the remaining years, and also reduces the need for institutional support.

Wrinkles can be fought with the use of emollients, but expensive creams don't do as much as claimed, Dr. Merry said.

Aging and the risks of falls

"Help! I've fallen down, and I can't get up!" is now a commonly-used humorous phrase. But there's nothing funny about falls and the elderly.

Lise Pitcher, a community residence supervisor at Ongwanada, says myths associated with falling and the elderly abound: "Falls are unavoidable." "Falls are accidents." "Falls are a result of bad luck or carelessness."

She explained that falls by elderly people can be caused by many factors, among them confusion, general weakness, decreased mobility and visual or hearing impairment. Environment can also play a part in the risk of falls. Lighting may not be adequate (there may also be too much glare or shadow); stairs may be too steep or long; floors may be slippery.

"About one-third of people 55 and older living at home have one or more falls each year," Lise said. Prevalence of falls increases with age.

"The majority of falls result in no serious physical injury, but about 10 per cent do, with fractures or head injury occurring. Three in 10 falls result in cuts, bumps and pain."

Lise said that the key to prevention of falls and associated injury is education. Know who's likely to fall

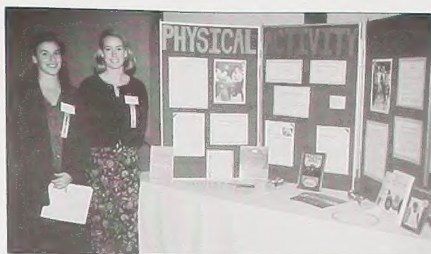


Photo: Jack Stiff

The best ways to get older

Joanna Black and Jill Cannon staff an information display on physical activity and aging. The two physical education students from Queen's University were at Kingston's Ongwanada Resource Centre and its recent annual conference for caregivers of people with developmental disabilities. The conference theme was Aging Clients and Aging Staff.

and why. Ask clients about their risks of falling. They'll usually know themselves. For example, they may have arthritis, may be "sometimes dizzy," or have difficulty dressing. Staff should do a risk assessment of their clients to establish medical, physical, environmental and other potential risk factors.

Aging and developmental disabilities

In the general population, most of us can expect to live well into our 80s, and even become centenarians. We can expect to live this long life with only a moderate period of old age and dependence. Old age today usually begins around 68.

Dr. Keith Fidler, the chief of medical staff at Rideau Regional Centre, in addressing the Ongwanada conference, added that those who remain physically active can retain their independence until they're almost 90 in many cases. "Among the best ways of saving health care dollars is to keep a person independent for a long period of time," he said.

People with severe developmental disabilities, particularly those with multiple disabilities, generally do not reach old age. A life expectancy of 40 is



Dr. Keith Fidler

Photo: Caroline Gunning, BCC

average, as is a high level of care.

Individuals who have mild developmental disabilities require some supervision throughout their lives. Old age usually begins around 55, without significant increase in care needs until they get older.

People with Down Syndrome have their own aging traits. They need lifelong supervision, and care needs increase after the age of 40, largely due to Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's affects every person with Down Syndrome over 40; although not all show it at that age, it tends to strike early. There's an epilepsy rate in those with severe Alzheimer's disease of about 80 per cent, which compares with 10 per cent in the general population with severe Alzheimer's.

Jack Stiff is an information officer with the MCSS Communications and Marketing Branch.

What we think about family

What do Canadians think about family life?

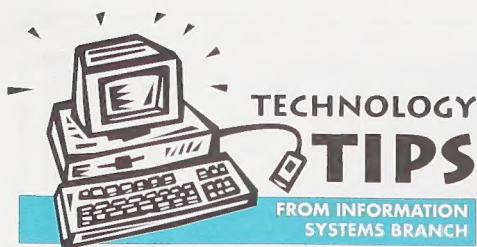
Some intriguing answers can be found in the most comprehensive public research study ever done on Canadians' attitudes and opinions about issues facing families in Canada today.

The State of the Family in Canada is a 120-page report prepared on behalf of the

Canada Committee for International Year of the Family 1994. It's based on extensive surveys with 2,051 Canadians and took 18 months to complete. Some of the findings among those surveyed: 68 per cent said the traditional two-parent family is the best type of family to raise children; 40 per cent of parents said they would quit the labour

force to stay home with their children if they could afford it; 70 per cent of youth surveyed said they expect to get married and never divorce; 77 per cent of people surveyed said they had "a very happy childhood." The report is available on loan through Library and Career Resources; e-mail LIBRARY or call the library at 416-326-6442.





The electronic post office on your PC

Soon we'll be making another leap forward, technologically speaking, when access to the electronic post office (EPO) is introduced across the ministry this summer. All ministry employees with an All-in-1 account will be able to use EPO.

This facility introduces considerable convenience to your workstation.

- Intergovernmental electronic mail: You will be able to exchange electronic mail with approximately 30,000 Ontario Public Service staff.
- Electronic mail to/from the Internet: You will be able to exchange

e-mail with business contacts around the world e.g. vendors, educational institutions etc.

- Fax from the desktop: You will be able to fax material directly from All-in-1 in much the same manner that you send e-mail.

Detailed descriptions of these features and instructions on the use of EPO will be distributed prior to implementation this summer.

If you have questions about EPO you may contact Helga Alfano at Information Systems Branch (416-730-6519), or your local systems officer.

LIBRARY CORNER

Focusing on the Internet...

by Dolly Lyn, Library and Career Resources manager

The Internet is a cornucopia of information via computer, and most first-time users are unprepared for the vast amount of information out there. As one writer puts it, "people feel a growing urgency to get on the information highway, but are uncertain what awaits them. They're not sure where they want to go, how to get there, or what they will do when they arrive."

For first-time users, there are various self-help books and articles to get you started or to hold your hand as you explore what's out there in cyberspace.

This is a partial list of what's available in the LCR that can get you on your way...

Books:

Dern, Daniel P. *The Internet guide for new users*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1994.



Kehe, Brendan P. *Zen and the art of the Internet: A beginner's guide to the Internet*. Chester, PA: Widener University, 1992.

Levine, John R. and Carol Baroudi. *The Internet for dummies*. San Mateo, CA: IDG, 1993.

Magazines:

Internet (monthly)
Online (monthly)

Articles:

Kantor, Andrew
"Internet: the undiscovered country."
PC magazine. Mar. 1994; Volume 13 (Number 5): pages 116-118.

Misc, Mark M. "Keys to success with the Internet" *Journal of Systems Management*. Nov. 1994; 45 (11): 6-10.

Rubin, Bryndis A. "The Internet where few trainers have gone before." *Training and Development Journal*. Aug. 1994; 48 (8): 6-10.

Simmonds, Curtis "Searching Internet archive sites with ARCHIE: why, what, where and how." *Online*. Mar. 1993; 17 (2): 50-55.

Tuss, Joan "Easy online access to helpful Internet guides." *Online*. Sept. 1993; 17 (5): 60-64.

Video:

"The Internet and you." Caledonia, MN: Winnebago Software Co., 1994.



For these materials, please contact Anna DiFolice at 416-326-6446 or e-mail LIBRARY with your request.

People and Places

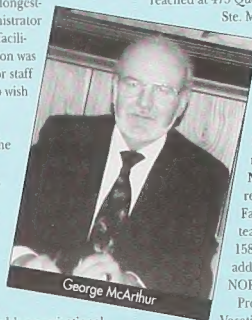
Staff at Midwestern Regional Centre in Palmerston bid adieu to **George McArthur**, who officially retires after more than 25 years with the OPS later this month. Virtually all of his career was as administrator of MRC; it's thought that he is the longest-serving administrator at any of our facilities. A reception was held Mar. 8 for staff and friends to wish him a happy retirement.

As part of the ministry's restructuring, Program Management Division has made two changes in the Management Support Branch's organizational structure. The Adoption and Operational Services Unit, managed by **Colette Kent**, has been renamed the Central Services Unit. Chaplaincy Services Ontario, which previously reported to MSB director **Barry Whalen**, now reports to Colette.

Paula Bouchard, who was with

the Planning and Systems Unit in the Thunder Bay Area Office, is now with the Ontario Women's Directorate. She is manager of its northern office in Thunder Bay.

The Implementation Team for the North Reorganization Project can be reached at 473 Queen St. E., Sault Ste. Marie P6A 1Z5.



Dawn Olar is providing clerical support and can be reached at 705-949-8052, ext. 224; the project manager is **Peter Noble**, who can be reached at ext. 229. Fax for the project team is 705-942-1582; the e-mail address is NORTH.REORG.Probation and Vocational

Rehabilitation staff in Burlington have relocated from the 760 Brant St. address. They are now at 2319 Fairview St., Units 606-607, Burlington ON L7R 2E3 (change the Burlington address on page 141 of the telephone directory; telephone number is the same). Family Benefits staff are still at the Brant St. location.

More funding for Special Services

An additional \$6 million has been allocated for the Special Services at Home program to support more families caring for their disabled children at home.

The funding, announced by Minister Tony Silipo Jan. 31, will provide services to about 1,500 families currently on waiting lists for the program and improve assistance to some families. SSAH already serves about 10,000 families at an annual cost of \$31 million.

Music therapists meet

The Canadian Association for Music Therapy will hold its 21st annual conference May 11-13 in Waterloo. For information, contact Nancy Schneider at the Faculty of Music, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo ON N2L 3C5, or telephone 519-884-1970, ext. 2631, or fax 519-747-9129.



dialogue

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